

CHAPTER 3

SECTION 16.6

STRABISMUS SURGERY

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I. PROCEDURE CODE RANGE

67311 - 67345, 67350, and 67399

II. DESCRIPTION

A. Strabismus is a deviation of the eye which the patient cannot overcome without medical or surgical intervention. It can be congenital, acquired (developmental) or can be caused by disease or injury. Onset of congenital strabismus is at birth and onset of the acquired strabismus is after 1 year (average, 2 1/2 years). Generally the divergent eye has not developed normal visual acuity.

B. Medical treatment is directed toward improvement of vision in the "lazy eye" by patching the eye, using eyeglasses or with orthoptics and visual therapy. Surgery is indicated when maximal improvement has been attained by medical methods.

C. Surgical correction of most eye deviations involves lengthening or shortening the extraorbital muscles of the eye, namely the medial and lateral rectus muscles. Many times a series of operations must be done. Surgery for strabismus is generally done early in the life of the afflicted individual to prevent diplopia (double vision) and eventual blindness in the "lazy" eye.

III. POLICY

Surgery to correct strabismus (whether congenital, acquired or caused by disease or injury) may be cost-shared.

Medically necessary medical services associated with the treatment of strabismus are covered, except as indicated below.

IV. POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

A. Surgical correction of the following eye deviations may be cost-shared:

1. Esotropia-permanent deviation inward (crossed eyes).

2. Exotropia-permanent deviation outward (wall-eye).
 3. Hypertropia-permanent upward deviation.
 4. Hypotropia-permanent downward deviation.
 5. Cyclotropia-permanent deviation around the anteroposterior axis.
 6. Subsequent surgeries necessary for the complete correction of a strabismus condition are covered.
- B. Eye examinations required in the diagnosis of strabismus are covered.

V. EXCLUSIONS

Eyeglasses, including eyeglasses prescribed in the treatment of eye deviations, and orthoptics (visual therapy).

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